(a) whether Government had taken note of Indian Cricket Team's defeat in various international championships particularly the recent defeat in the World Cup-2007;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether Government had taken up the matter with BCCI;

(d) if so, the response of the Board thereto and if not, the reasons therefore;

(e) whether Indian team is true representative of the country when vast talent is available due to huge popularity of the game;

(f) if so, the justifications therefor; and

(g) if not, the steps proposed to be taken by Government to spot the real talents and to save country's name in international fora?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Yes, Sir. The performance of Indian Team at the World Cup 2007 has been disheartening.

(b) to (g) The Government took up the matter with BCCI. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has informed the Ministry that this was because our team did not play to its full potential; the BCCI has deliberated on the matter and also obtained the suggestions of former captains of the Indian cricket team. Based on the inputs received, the BCCI is taking necessary steps for improving the preparation of the Indian cricket team for participation in major events which includes intensive training inputs in different aspects of the game; norms in terms of minimum level of participation in domestic competitions etc. Selection of the national team is done by a committee which is fully equipped to choose the best possible players for the Indian team.

Lack of modern infrastructure for sports

2726. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is lack of modern infrastructure for sports in the country and the infrastructure of international standards is not available in India to the elite sportspersons; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to create modern infrastructure of international standards for the development of sports and sportspersons?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, there are serious inadequacies in sports infrastructure and sports facilities in the country, which are being addressed. However, 'Sports' being a State subject in the Constitution, the primary responsibility for the creation of sports infrastructure facilities lies with State Governments. Till 31.3.2005, the Ministry was supplementing the efforts of State Governments by providing assistance under the Centrally Sponsored Sports Infrastructure Scheme in accordance with the approved pattern subject to receipt of viable proposals. But with effect from 1.4.2005, the sports infrastructure schemes were transferred to the State Sector. Thus, fresh cases of sports infrastructure projects will have to be funded by the State Governments out of their own resources.

The Sports Authority of India has also developed extensive infrastructure for sports training which is being further expanded and upgraded. Emphasis is also being given for maximum utilization of the infrastructure created in different parts of the country for events such as the National Games, SAF Games, Afro-Asian Games, etc., and under the State Governments Schemes. All this is in addition to the proposed creation of State-of-the-art infrastructure in the context of the Commonwealth Games 2010 and Commonwealth Youth Games 2008.

The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports is also considering the launching of a scheme-"Panchayat Yuva Khel Abhiyan" with the objective of developing basic sports infrastructure, and promoting games and sports activities, at the village/sub-district level, both as an essential ingredient of the development of the Youth and to significantly expand the catchment for sporting and nurturing of sports talent. Consultation are being held in this regard with all the stakeholders concerned with a view to finalizing the proposal.

Statement by Minister correcting answer to question

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): Sir, I lay on the Table a statement (in English and Hindi) correcting the reply given in the Rajya Sabha on the 15th March, 2007 to Unstarred Question 1900 regarding CRF funds for development of roads.